



Release Highlights: January 30, 2006

MONTANA Women-Owned Firms, 2002 Economic Census <http://ceic.mt.gov/EconCen.asp>

Business ownership, like home ownership, is part of the American Dream. For women in Montana, this dream is slowly being realized. For example, nationally, women owned 30% of all businesses in 2002; in Montana the ownership rate is 24%. In addition, Montana's growth rate from 1997 to 2002 for women-owned businesses was 9%, less than half the national rate of 20%. One bright spot for Montana's women-owned businesses is the 18% jump in companies with employees, more than double the national rate of 8%.

Item	1997	2002	Growth Rate
All firms	93,667	100,403	7%
Women Owned	22,404	24,519	9%
With Employees	3,924	4,635	18%

Montana women-owned businesses in 2002 generated \$2.1 billion in sales and receipts and employed over 21,000 workers who earned \$363 million in pay. Nearly 4,000 women-owned businesses provide Other or Consumer services, such as auto repair, laundry and dry cleaning, personal care such as hair cuts, pet care and funeral services. A close second, with over 3,600 businesses, was the Professional, Technical and Scientific Services industrial sector. Lawyers, accountants, architects, engineers, and consultants all belong to this classification. Nationally, the largest number of women-owned businesses occurred in the Health Care sector in 2002 followed by Other or Consumer Services.

Retail Trade generated over \$500 million in total sales for all of Montana's women-owned businesses, more than double the \$218 million for Wholesale Trade, the second largest. Construction sales ranked third, with \$207 million from the 1,093 firms owned by women.

Nearly 40% of employees who work for women-owned businesses work in two industries. Women owned hotels, restaurants and taverns, the Accommodations and Food Services sector, employed over 4,700 Montana workers in 2002. Retail firms employed nearly 3,200 workers while generating over \$462 million in sales, 26% of all sales by women-owned businesses with employees. A distant second in sales was Wholesale Trade with \$214 million while employing 1,077 workers.

In Montana, the only industrial sector with more female-owned businesses than male-owned is Health Care and Social Assistance. Women owned nearly 43% of all the hospitals, doctor offices, labs, nursing homes and childcare facilities in 2002. An additional 11% of these facilities had equal ownership between men and women.

The U.S. Census Bureau recently released *the 2002 Survey of Business Owners: Women-Owned Firms* which provides information at the state, metropolitan, micropolitan, county and city levels as well as by kind of business. Women-owned businesses are privately held firms in which women own 51 percent or more of the interest or stock of the business.

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